

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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**Renk Agribusiness Institute**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**Director**

Paul Mitchell

Professor, Agricultural & Applied Economics

**Associate Director**

Jeremy Beach

Teaching Faculty, Agricultural & Applied Economics

**Renk Chair in Agribusiness**

Guanming Shi

Professor & Chair, Agricultural & Applied Economics

# OUR MISSION

The Renk Agribusiness Institute was established during the 1996-97 academic year with an endowment from the Walter and Martha Renk and Richard and Sharon Renk families of Sun Prairie, WI. The purpose of the Renk Agribusiness Institute is to manage and coordinate agribusiness teaching, research, and extension/outreach at the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, the School of Business and UW Extension, and to serve as a focal point for scholarly activity relating to agribusiness on the UW-Madison campus.

## RESEARCH

**Paul Mitchell** has an active research program focusing on issues of importance to Wisconsin agriculture and agribusiness. In 2022 he published two book chapters and continued work on several existing and new grants as co-PI or lead PI including two USDA-SCRI, two USDA-AFRI, a USDA AFRP, and a USDA OREI plus a state CERANR grant and an intramural WisCORE grant. Dr. Mitchell was also Co-PI on a USDA Specialty Crop Research Initiative CAP competitive grant renewal for \$7.5 million - Sweet CAP: Integrated technologies to improve sweet corn breeding, production and marketability. To learn more about Dr. Mitchell's research program visit:

<https://aae.wisc.edu/pdmitchell/research/>

**Guanming Shi** generated three published papers in 2022 along with two papers under review and three papers to be submitted. She also submitted four grant proposals, two of which are based on a new line of inquiry on social justice in alphabetical ordering (of last name), which is expected to build on a collaboration with faculty in other departments.



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# TEACHING

## Jeremy Beach

- AAE 267 – Career & Professional Development
- AAE 375 – Economics & Business of Food
- AAE 399 – Coordinated Internship

## Paul Mitchell

- AAE 320 – Agricultural Systems Management
- 2 graduate students supervised in 2022

## Guanming Shi

- AAE 635 – Applied Microeconomic Theory
- AAE 724 – Practicum for Applied Economists
- 5 graduate students supervised in 2022

# NEW HIRE

The Renk Agribusiness Institute provided start-up funding for Jeff Hadachek, PhD candidate at UC-Davis, who was recently hired for an Extension Value-Added Agriculture position in AAE.

# SCHOLARSHIPS

Sixteen undergraduates majoring in Agricultural Business Management (ABM), Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAE), or pursuing the certificate in Business Management for Agricultural & Life Sciences, received 2022-2023 Renk Scholarships for a total of \$32,000 in financial support. See [2022-2023 Renk Scholars](#) for short bios of each scholarship recipient.



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# NEW RENK CHAIR

**Guanming Shi**, Professor and Chair in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, has been appointed as the 2022-2024 Renk Chair in Agribusiness, which provides support for research, teaching, and outreach for three years.

Shi's research program focuses on the economics of industrial organization in the U.S and China, including firm strategic behavior under imperfect competition using pricing, product offering, and intellectual property protection, with applications to biotechnology and innovation in the seed industry.

More information about Professor Shi can be found here:

<https://aae.wisc.edu/faculty/gshi/>

# EXTENSION/OUTREACH

Paul Mitchell's outreach program in the state focuses broadly on the economics of crop production for all Wisconsin farmers, both commodity and specialty crop farmers, from small, diversified organic vegetable growers to conventional, commercial scale farmers, with a focus on production, risk, and policy. Much of Paul's outreach activity in 2022 focused on farm programs ARC and PLC and speaking about farm issues and the agricultural economy to both ag and non-ag audiences. This engagement generated multiple outputs including journal articles, reports, magazine articles, extension publications, and presentations. To learn more about Paul's outreach activities visit: <https://aae.wisc.edu/pdmitchell/extension/> and <https://aae.wisc.edu/pdmitchell/news/>.

The **Wisconsin Agricultural Outlook Forum** remains the Institute's primary outreach event held annually at the end of January. The 2022 Forum, *Agriculture, Nitrogen, and Water Quality in Wisconsin* was once again held in person with 80 attendees while over 175 attendees tuned in via livestream. The program included both campus and external stakeholder perspectives on current and future efforts towards improving water quality in Wisconsin.

The 2023 Forum, titled *Climate Smart Dairy in Wisconsin* drew 150 in-person attendees while 75 attendees tuned in via livestream. The program covered the various climate smart initiatives throughout Wisconsin's dairy supply chain that aim to help farmers and industry implement sustainable production practices.

We also would like to take time to remember and celebrate the life of **Brian Gould**, who passed away in 2022. Brian held the Renk Chair in Agribusiness from 2017 until his retirement in 2019. He received his Ph.D. from Cornell University and spent the better part of his career at the University of Wisconsin-Madison conducting dairy-related research and outreach. Opportunities to work with farmers, helping them make better production and management decisions, gave him an abiding respect and admiration for their hard work. He spent many hours in his office with an open-door policy, meeting with students, colleagues and others working in the dairy industry, meeting in-person, on the telephone or online. The most difficult part of his retirement decision was no longer working with students although he continued to stay connected to many of them. His graduate students were welcome to call him anytime and he would talk them through their research obstacles.

## CONTACT

Website: <https://renk.aae.wisc.edu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RenkAgribusiness>

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